A thoughtful person associating with a wise man soon perceives the truth.
—*The Dhammapada*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 52 JULY, 1964 NUMBER 9

IN THE HEARTS OF ALL

IN the last analysis, the soul is its own savior. It follows that, from first to the very last, the modes of action in behalf of the soul's liberation from "the bonds of conditioned existence" are nwrapped in paradox.

For, since the beginning of time, despite the ultimate reality of he soul's self-dependence, human beings have been profoundly de-endent upon one another. The archetypal relationship of human rogress—progress, that is, in the soul's understanding—has been he sacred bond between teacher and disciple, and, in a lesser sense, arent and child. This archetype, however, has another pole—that f triumphant independence—the absolute stance of the individual gainst all odds. In the one situation, the ego feels his unity with ll who have been before him, and with those whom, in like manner, e is bound to help. In the other, he must learn to "hold fast to that hich has neither substance nor existence," and to stand firm in the onviction of his own hard-won self-knowledge.

The understanding of history, then, and of the human meanings f cyclic law, will involve a grasp of these polarities of the human ituation, and will recognize in the paradoxes which prevail at any iven moment the delicate balance between the two—for the indi-idual, for societies, and for the entire human race.

Why is the course of human evolution so difficult to understand? Mainly because these polarities are endlessly reflected at various evels of the psychic relationships of human beings. When the

soul's longing for independence is reflected in the arena of personal emotions, it becomes the stubbornness of pride, the self-assertion of egotism. When the lines of egoic connection among all souls are turned into less than universal affiliations, every action in the name of "brotherhood" becomes partisan and double-edged, matching its good to some with evil for others. And the "good" is not really good, since it bespeaks a blindness of the heart, while the evil inevitably generates attitudes of separateness and antagonism in all but the wisest souls.

It is from the record and scene of these multiplied confusions that we get the popular and ruling conceptions of what is "practical" and "true to the facts" of human behavior. Even when a great teacher speaks out of his heart's knowledge, his words cannot help but suffer from the approximate resolutions of the paradox which belong to the age in which he speaks. If individual disciples discern with difficulty the inner meaning of a teacher's utterance, how much more difficult must understanding be for those whose perceptions are in terms of the gross common denominators of their time. For the "mind of an age," is, after all, no more than the generalizing conclusions which are acceptable to mankind in the mass.

So the reason for the two doctrines—the inner and the outer—of great teachers becomes plain enough. There is always the delicate, individual resolution of the paradox, possible only to individuals, and unique to each one, and there are the broader but related resolutions which are capable of popular utterance. And both have to be preserved as *living* teachings, with a life maintained by continuous interchange—both the private and the public dialogue.

Here on earth, now, in the present, are situations presenting very nearly absolute dilemmas. The men who are supposed to be "brothers," one and all, in their highest nature, are gathered and gathering into formations capable of immeasurable destructiveness to one another. Admittedly, the ranging of these threatening energies in positions of challenge and crouched readiness for retaliation is a manifest denial and defiance of all the "virtues" held to be most precious to human beings; yet we are told that, in the circumstances, men have no choice. They *must* take these positions, in behalf of all they hold dear.

So now the paradox, instead of being one which thwarts only learning and understanding, is massively transferred to the field of external experience. The logic of the half-truths accepted by our

age becomes the discipline of inescapable ruin. And "resignation," instead of being a quality of the soul's reliance on moral law, turns into a dark indifference to overwhelming tragedy for all mankind.

What is the solution for this desperate situation? The solution has not changed. The soul is still its own savior. The paradox is still a paradox of understanding, behind the lurid dilemma of the hour. It is a question, now, as always, of finding and repeating the particular form of self-knowledge which speaks to *this* dilemma, and to the inner paradox as well.

How do men help other men in this basic situation? They help, first, by never faltering in their recognition of the soul-nature of other men. An answer which ignores this primary reality is no answer at all, but a closure, even a slamming, of doors of perception. They help by learning to intuit the areas where a further incarnation of egoity may be occurring, and by placing no psychological obstacles in the way of self-reliant action. They help by making it a rule of life to speak only to the soul-intelligence of human beings, in such language as seems appropriate and communicative at the time.

Naturally and inevitably, such help can be given only by the wise. Who would feel able to behave consistently in this way? Who could hope for more than an occasional and exceedingly fortunate flash of insight, which might, just possibly, turn the self-made key in the lock of another's mind?

The truth of the matter is that help of this sort becomes reasonable only if it remains wholly unexpected; the important thing is to see that this is how it happens, and that there is no routine replacement for having it happen in this way. For thought upon the complexity of authentic learning, and on the integrity of the mind of another, is itself a meditation on the first great truth—that the soul is its own savior. A brotherhood which rushes past this truth carting a load of promissory syllogisms is only wasting the sacrifices and strenuous efforts of the educators of mankind, and cheapening into some kind of psycho-intellectual escalator of doctrine those inner steps of resolution that each man must take for himself.

Meanwhile, the world is just beginning to see that the present is a time of high and desperate emergency—a crisis for the soul as well as the gross corporealities of nations and states. To view the world with confidence in this hour can be no less than to view it as a world of souls, and to think and act accordingly.

THE USE OF MEMORY

OPEN an old letter file or a diary and it will present you with a half-forgotten world. At one time all the events, places, friendships, thoughts and dreams recorded, were part of a vital stream of life. It is startling to note the events and situations that memory no longer recalls and that form no part of the present. Nevertheless, when the former period of activity has been reviewed, it will take its place in the life then lived and relate, through perception of karmic threads, to the present. It will also be noted that, as the years and their decades pass, we become associated with constantly changing groups, each taking or giving something. It is therefore expedient to examine the nature of the memories remaining near to our present consciousness. Such an examination should reveal, like a weather vane in the wind, the directions taken. Only clearly remembered experiences tend to be thought of as part of the present character, but karmically, every past action has, or will have, its effect, and our manner of meeting those effects is closely related to whatever of the past we consciously possess.

Man, though made of thought, bases his power to reason and to discriminate upon his past experience. His thoughts alone cannot assume the part of the discriminator. He acts before the great backdrop of time, and if he has been bound to the fruit of his actions, his choices and decisions will always be weighted by his likes and dislikes. He will be hindered by unwished-for recall, brought back to the conscious mind by uncontrolled associated ideas or by sensual impulses. Recollection indiscriminately aroused is like a spring, the waters of which are bitter to the taste. It is part of wisdom to search for that which is homogeneous with the higher nature, and at other moments to keep memory in abeyance. The keener the intellect, and the more colorful the life, the greater the storage of memory. We may cultivate memory in order that ideas can be retained, like the contents of a book—ready to use when needed. But for one who would enter the higher planes of thought, memory must be handled with care. Memories returning by way of the

lower mind are therefore a hindrance. There are critical moments in flight when all baggage is thrown out to "lighten the plane," which might otherwise lose altitude. If the soul nature is to rise, the burden of the past must be lessened.

The control of memory is essential to concentration. When nothing can divert the mind, concentration is assured. The senses distract from without, memory from within. At times it is easier to shut out the senses than to control the interruptions of memory. Mental deposits that form a basis for the memory are recorded, we say, in the astral light—a division of the *Akasa*—that surrounds and penetrates the gross matter of the physical man—but they reappear in the brain. This astral light is sensitive to changes, and so is the human brain. The cortex alone is said to contain more possible combinations between its cells than the national telephone system with its innumerable receivers and exchanges. Add to this possibility the moment by moment registration of thoughts, desires, experiences, and sounds, and one gains some measure of the possible scope of the memory. Therefore, to concentrate, the movements of the mental apparatus must be patiently controlled through practice.

Memory is experienced in three ways: by remembrance, the power to recall; recollection, which gathers as much as possible relating to the object of remembrance; and by thoughtful reminiscence. The last penetrates far deeper than remembrance or recollection, for its source is beyond the astral light in the Akasa, where the soul memory is registered. It brings to the mind the essence of experiences without the burden of all related thoughts and acts. It also brings back the sum of that which has been experienced in former lives, and therefore forms the basis for intuition; it is the handmaiden of genius. For the brain itself the greater part of the past is blotted out by time.

How does the mind react to time? We say to the bereaved, Time will help; to the student, Give yourself time and you will understand; to those who worry, Take time, your difficulties will solve themselves. Thus time becomes a metaphysical adjuster, in many instances, giving thought processes pause for reappraisal. But time is also the clock of memory—its minutes are our days; its hours, our years; and, at the end of "three score and ten" of these years, the subconscious memory retains every detail of time's passing. When concentrated, or during deep sleep, the mind does not feel

the passage of time. In both these mental states time is suspended. Time does not cease, but the mind takes upon itself an aspect of consciousness not subject to the passing of minutes and hours. Deep sleep allows the higher mind to return to its spiritual plane, thus leaving no trace of its actions in the physical brain. But meditation upon a fitting theme can consciously raise the mind, when concentrated, to the sphere of the Buddhic principle. The memory of such achievement is a benediction.

The Western mind is not given to meditation. The contemplative disposition has little place in our civilization, wherein activity is the salient characteristic. And as higher meditation is based upon metaphysical principles, its practice is not readily accomplished. However, if concentration has been rendered easy and natural, a long step has been taken toward true meditation. This leads us to the question of memory in the higher principles. So little is known of the Higher Self through actual experience, that the memory does not respond when the mind searches for ways and means to attain Self-knowledge. It is like attempting to drive in a dense fog over a slippery pavement. But one can draw to the side of the road and wait. This should be the attitude toward meditation; for through it the mind can rise above the pitfalls of the physical life. Then it will be found that a new sort of memory is gradually created to support meditation. Within the higher principles is stored the memory of former lives. This body of knowledge has been likened to a great wheel, only a small segment of which touches the mind in any one life. But there is always the possibility of enlarging this otherwise small inflow. This, then, is the secret of the *spiritual man,* waiting patiently with so much to give, while his shadow flits away a lifetime in nonessentials, to die, perhaps, without having known of its true heritage.

Memory ceases its normal function in dreams. Dreaming is universal. Careful research has proved that absence of any recollection of having dreamed is no proof that dreaming did not occur. The dream state alternates with deep sleep at intervals throughout the period of rest. Eyelids are seen to flutter and face muscles may move, while the rate of breathing changes. If awakened at this point the dreamer is always able to recall the subject of his dream. But the act of remembering occurs only at the moment of waking. This is common to all, for unless there is at least a moment's return to the waking consciousness there is no recall. One cannot enter

the dream state and remember, as one does when awake, that which has occurred in former dreams. There is, however, a repetition of certain symbols, personal to each dreamer. These symbols may suggest remembrance, but the fact that the symbol has been experienced before is only realized in the waking consciousness.

This absence of the normal function of memory in the dream state does not lessen its importance to one in search of self-knowledge. Although dreams are often confused, the clarity and unique symbolism of certain dreams afford knowledge, and, at times, glimpses into the future. Such important dreams automatically awaken the sleeper and are remembered. The student of dreams is wise if, moved by a sense of special significance, he takes a few moments to jot down all relevant details; for if sleep ensues there is some loss. For the earnest student of metaphysics there is much to be gained. A carefully kept record of clear and consistent dreams will reveal the presence of a depth of consciousness not felt during the activity of the waking state. There are times when the higher self can instruct through the dream state and, although the full import of the experience may not be felt immediately, the symbolism remains and develops its message through the power of meditation.

Meditation restricts the flow of memory to a single motive or subject. It is like a magnet that attracts only the gold from the gravel bed of memory. And when the stream of thought subsides, the thinker is enriched—not only by the development of an idea, for he repossesses also the finer, perhaps forgotten moments of aspiration. The higher the thought strata, the greater the wealth gained; and it is part of a treasure that cannot be forfeited or lost.

Limitations of Recollection

Those who have read of everything are thought to understand everything too; but it is not always so—reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what is read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment.

—John Locke

letters • questions • comment

The fact that so few people are able to "get behind" appearances—either in events or in men—seems to be a continuing cause of confusion. Is it possible that a concept of Karma might help one penetrate these outward appearances?

Students of Theosophy are convinced that the idea of Karma helps more than anything else to illuminate the relationships between human beings. In the first place, an understanding of the law of Karma enables us to temporarily accept the restrictions, the "checks," that life places on an individual. In the second place, there is no alembic like the philosophy of Karma to encourage us to get behind our *own* façade of personality. For, though we are "true selves" *in potentia,* we tend to be fixated on one particular image of self, and thus see everything through the distorted perspective of its biases and preconceptions. It is only when we are able to "take our personality with a large grain of salt," as the philosopher Ducasse has put it, that we begin to look beyond this "self-image"—the superficial image we press upon the world because it enables us to have an inflated opinion of our own status or accomplishments. And this image is, after all, pleasing to only a certain part of our nature. The present "personality" has to be seen against the backdrop of a being *within,* who is not concerned with images, pretenses (conscious or unconscious), or self-gratulation, but is concerned only with things that nourish the "soul"—that is, whatever integrates with true *destiny.*

The sense of destiny is encouraged in a man as he studies Karma. He then considers his own inner life within the framework of all the experiences he has gone through—all his mismanagements of affairs and all his mistakes in relationships with people—and comes to accept them as opportunities for making meaningful corrections of the distortions of his perspective. He sees that the distortions are not *himself*—not even the self he might become during this lifetime. Realizing this, he can look at others in the same way, and begin to see faint reflections of egoic purpose, however distorted they

may be by ego-involved personality patterns. He learns not to take another person *merely* on the basis of what he is able to manifest at any given time, for he understands that just as he, himself, is able to manifest and destroy innumerable personalities, so is the other.

Perhaps we don't "like" someone. The perspective of karma suggests that the fault may be his, or ours, or both, and that beyond this immediate, personal, reaction is the "long view"—the view of soul. When we sense this, we see that someone who is always disturbed by his situation, who feels that the circumstances of his life are unfair, needs only to alter his perspective. But this takes time. At first, "karma" and "reincarnation" are only words to him; and so long as he thinks of karma as "fate," his lot is "bad karma." Eventually, however, he begins to recognize that karma implies an assumption of continuity in responsibility. From this comes continuity of motivation, which means assimilation of experience.

Karma, for such a person, then, becomes something quite different—the opposite of fate, which is destiny. It may take a lifetime of experience before the idea which came intellectually reaches the heart to be assimilated, but this is the dynamic of the philosophy of karma, and it works out in psychological terms.

The core of our personal problem is clearly the problem of the *image* of self versus the faceless self within; and it is in the solution of this problem that the *Bhagavad-Gita* gives profound psychological assistance. The *Gita* introduces us to three dominant psychological qualities, which we can see in all human beings. The first of these, the quality of *tamas,* reflects indifference to any kind of striving. Dominated by *tamas,* we are so preoccupied with our immediate situation that we cannot act. The energy that is ours as "soul" is unable to manifest because we are fixated in this particular way. (Here we may remind ourselves that H.P.B. said that inertia is the greatest of all occult forces.) But the experiences of life will finally shake us out of our lethargy, and, as we try to liberate ourselves, we begin to embody the next quality—*rajas.* Polarized in *rajas,* we gradually awaken to a sense of the power within us, and we act—we *do* something. The danger now is that we may think that action is all-important. But this, too, is a delusion, and we have to see it as such. We have to realize that action unconnected with meaning binds us in a composite result of all the things we have done that are not sufficiently meaningful for soul-assimilation. We have to work through and past the karma of the "*rajasic* man."

Finally, we move on to another stage—the *sattvic*. Our desire now is toward the personification of a kind of goodness; but the egocentric position is still predominant, remaining so as long as we are influenced by any one or all of the three qualities.

We have observed, of course, that the men who have transcended the egocentric predicament and liberated the truly creative forces within the self are happy in the real sense of the word. It doesn't matter where they go or what they do; they always seem to know what they are about. These human beings have followed an opposite course to that of the fixated man; they have been trying to expand the meaning of life, instead of contracting it around a single self or person. They have always found things to do with and for others; have learned from these others; have made *their* karma also their own. Thus the pace of their initiation into the deeper meanings of life has been accelerated by the natural empathy they have established with other human beings. They progress rapidly, and are a source of inspiration to others.

So the philosophy of Karma universalizes. Every man's problem is everyone else's, in a certain sense. The self out there and the self over here and myself are parts of one self, because we have all incarnated, and will continue to incarnate, in similar complexities of personality. The purview of Karma not only provides a tool for acquiring self-knowledge; it also furnishes a compelling impulsion toward awareness of brotherhood.

KARMA AND IMMORTALITY

Karma is that moral kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration or reincarnation. This simply means that there remains nought after each Personality but the causes produced by it—causes which are undying, which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects. No "personality"—a mere bundle of material atoms and of instinctual and mental characteristics—can of course continue, as such, in the world of pure Spirit. Only that which is immortal in its very nature and divine in its essence, namely, the Ego, can exist for ever.

—*The Theosophical Glossary*

ON FIRST ACQUAINTANCE— "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

XIII

The physicist who regards Space merely as a representation of our mind, or extension unrelated to things in it, which Locke defined as capable of neither resistance nor motion; the paradoxical materialist who would have a *void* there, where he can see no matter, would reject with the utmost contempt the proposition that "Space is a substantial though (apparently) an absolutely unknowable living Entity." To the Eastern Occultist, who is an objective Idealist at the bottom, in the *real* world, which is a Unity of Forces, there is "a connection of all matter in the *plenum,*" as Leibnitz would say. This is symbolized in the Pythagorean Triangle. (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 615.)

WE might note here that H.P.B. considered the term "idealism" a very much misused word, and thus she must have had a special meaning in mind when she called the Eastern Occultist an "objective Idealist." One of the clearest distinctions between a materialist, a pure idealist, and an objective idealist which occur in H.P.B.'s writings, is to be found in her article, "Modern Idealism, Worse than Materialism" (*Theosophist,* October, 1896):

> We recognize a good deal of the Vedantic doctrines in European Idealism, but none of its highly philosophical and consistent logic. The conclusions of Materialism and Idealism, in fact, are so far stretched, that in their final synthesis they almost meet in their atheism and pessimism. The last word of both . . . is a dreary negation of any possible future existence in spirit . . . (for) witness the attitude of Materialists (or Realists) and Idealists toward what J. S. Mill terms the "battle-ground of metaphysics"—the question of an external world.
>
> In what respect is such an *idealist* more "ideal" than the Materialist? One denies point blank anything existing outside of matter; the other, that anything *is*—no more matter than Spirit —that these two positions do not exhaust the alternatives. While it is clear that the Realist is unable to postulate the independent existence of the *External* World, except by *projecting into space the visions of his own subjectivity,* the (*pure!*) Idealist is brought face to face with the assertion of science, that the objective universe existed aeons before the first dawn of human consciousness.

> It is from this predicament that we might be rescued by the compromise between the two opposing systems, known variously as *Transfigured* Realism, Transcendental Realism or, better, objective (as opposed to pure) Idealism . . . According to this system, the external world of this our present consciousness is the joint product of Object and Subject.
>
> For the Occultist the subject as much as the object, *Ego,* Sun, Mind and the Universe itself is—a *Maya,* a huge illusion. But, as both the Perceiver and the Object perceived belong to the same plane of illusion, they are mutual and reciprocal Realities for *such time as the Manvantaric illusion lasts.*

After such a lengthy quotation, despite its usefulness, an inquirer might well ask: How is this the talisman for reform within my personal life? How does the study of such abstract concepts drive me into a better mode of every-day life?

Possibly we could say that such study is not so likely to change the appearance of our day-to-day acts as it is to alter the way we experience those acts. Metaphysics may not be aimed so much at deflating the concurrences we call "every-day life," as it is in proving that the concurrences are not fortuitous, but are set meaningfully within a transcendental framework. It may be that we more desperately need a sense of *coherence and pattern* and a hierarchy of values, than we need any specific change in acts or their appearances.

Thomas Taylor's description of Platonic writing in his introduction to Plato's *Timaeus* may help us see how the elevation of our mental life may be a prerequisite to any useful changes in the specific experiences which each day brings:

> And this also must be granted by those who are the least acquainted with the works of Plato, that the manner of his composition is Socratic, philanthropic, and demonstrative. If therefore Plato any where mingles the Socratic and Pythagoric property together, this must be apparent in the present dialogue. For it contains, agreeable to the Pythagoric custom, elevation of intellect together with intellectual and divine conceptions: it likewise suspends every thing from intelligibles, bounds wholes in numbers, exhibits things mystically and symbolically, is *full of an elevating property, of that which transcends partial conceptions,* and of the enunciative mode of composition. But from the Socratic philanthropy it contains an easy accommodation to familiar discourse, gentleness of manners, proceeding by demonstration, contemplating things through images, the ethical peculiarity, and every thing of this kind. Hence it is a venerable dialogue, and deduces its conceptions from on high, from the first

> principles of things; but it mingles the demonstrative with the enunciative, and prepares us to understand physics, not only physically but . . . spiritually. (Italics added.)

Perhaps one reason *The Secret Doctrine* comes to have a talismanic character for some of its students—a character that separates it from many valuable books—is that it relives in its pages the advice of Timaeus, who says:

> Discourses should be assimilated to the things of which they are the interpreters, and hence it will be necessary that the dialogue should contain both that which is physical and that which is spiritual; imitating by this means Nature which it contemplates.

We might say that many students go to *The Secret Doctrine* expecting both too much and not enough: on the one hand, they expect too much in the sense that they hope to understand and comprehend it with the ordinary consciousness; on the other, they anticipate far too little in not transcending this type of expectation in their work with *The Secret Doctrine*. Thus, it is their ignorance of the potential rewards which make them so slap-dash and unrhythmical in their approach. Especially is this so when ignorance of what the *S.D.* has to offer is combined with preconceptions.

Hence, our definitions of "learning" and "growth" make of us weary travelers who lead their horses to the distant city, travelers who foolishly have walked when they might have ridden. Someday we may broaden our small groove of "walking" into a more universal idea of travel.

Yet this may happen only after we have "failed," when our effort to understand has withered into despair and we are carried along, not by a sense of progress, but by our commitment. Thus one might say that a commitment of the self to the Self carries the seeker over the no-man's land where there seems no practical reason to continue, to a more distant plateau where "higher" *reasons* may emerge.

Of course there is the objection that such commitment is rigid and mechanical, and so it is. After all, is this not a harnessing of the lower mind to its rightful kingdom, *and also taking away* from it that which does not belong? When despair creeps over the personality, when it is no longer capable of "expecting" or "regretting," then it might return into the kingdom of "rhythm and quantity," into the endurance of cyclic observance and leave judgment to the Seer. Once we are inwardly convinced that we *ought* to make the

experiment, our personality can take up the neutral task of building. When the world of analytical "growth" and "learning" becomes sufficiently evanescent and incomprehensible in its maze of surface regularities, we will turn into another path. It may be here that we most need the drive of our inner promptings, rather than what somebody else thinks we "should be doing."

If one could say that our promptings arise non-verbally before they become formulated, and that the actual work of formulation is done by the "personal" or "analytical" brain; then, as an instrument, it needs recognition of and union with our Conscience as a source of leadership. By becoming a "clearing house" between the unformulated promptings and our formulated outer life it may gradually lose its autonomy as a thing *per se*—being absorbed by the task of *listening and transmitting*. Thus, our Conscience, though veiled in darkness, can, by means of a purified personal mind, cast reflections of itself into the sentient world, such that we might eventually see before us that life so beautifully described in the *Bhagavad-Gita*'s reference to "the man whose passions enter his heart as waters run into the unswelling passive ocean."

Would not such an attitude lead us to the love of our "fellow man for his own sake and not for personal gratification"? As H.P.B. said in a kindred context:

> A Theosophist, if he contemplates Adeptship, must not revenge himself. He must suffer in silence rather than excite in someone else evil passions or the desire to revenge himself in his turn. Non-resistance to evil, forgiveness and charity, are the first rules of discipleship. ("Misconceptions," *Le Lotus* I:6.)

As we come more and more to the idea that the condition of the planet is *our* condition, and that the state of our body only defines the nature of our work in relation to this *larger* Reality, which is more "us" than our rind of flesh, then the idea of violence or revenge would become as ludicrous to us as anger or revenge by the personal man against his sore toe or finger.

It may be that an alertness to the Voice of Conscience will gradually strengthen our Will, leading us to that particular way by which the personal life can be most usefully sacrificed to the general Life, for, as said of "Will and Desire" in the second issue of H.P.B.'s *Lucifer*:

> Both will and desire are absolute *creators*, forming the man himself and his surroundings. But will creates intelligently—de-

sire blindly and unconsciously. The man, therefore, makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light.

His task is twofold: to awaken the will, to strengthen it by use and conquest, to make it absolute ruler within his body; and, parallel with this, to purify desire.

Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification. (*Lucifer*, October, 1887)

Why are knowledge and will the tools by which we purify our lower nature? Perhaps gaining knowledge is a process of directing desire; *i.e.*, when we overtly turn our attention to a given area we tend to desire it.

It might be in some such sense as this that one could say the study of *The Secret Doctrine* is primarily a metaphysical study bringing an ethical result. How is this? Well, for example, we are often aware of what we should do long before we discover or engender the needed desire or will to carry it out; so in this sense, we might say that the *S.D.* assumes that we know more or less the direction of an ethical beginning, and that our major need is the motive power to get moving. Thus, in our study, we may see a subtle process of convincing the lower mind that the trip is worth the sacrifice; in other words, the higher Manas is awakened sufficiently to begin the first tentative dominations of the lower kingdom—dominations that will lead eventually to the total subjection of the Lower, making it a neutral *reflection in the objective world* of the metaphysical life of the Ego.

Preparation for this awakening might be said to involve what is often called "the study of philosophical mysticism," though to so classify it tends to destroy the subleties inherent in the process of rendering one's nature porous to intuition.

In our innermost being there is an incessant coming and going
Of forms, sounds and sighs,
Voices of beings born and unborn speak
. . . and we try to listen . . .
To hear and feel the cosmic Rhythm. . . .
To rise from "mere expression" as the heart calls for understanding.

YOUTH FORUM

Horace Walpole once remarked, "This world is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel." This epigram, though probably correct in its implication that tragedy is as much a view of life as a literary form, seems nevertheless a great oversimplification of the nature of literary tragedy, since it indicates that anyone who "feels," and who has talent, could write one. Many writers and critics think otherwise, however, declaring that a tragedy could not possibly be written today in our complex and compromised world; our view of life is too secular and too muddled to permit it.

What view of life, then, would allow for tragic expression? Is it conceivable that a Theosophist could write a tragedy?

The question is not one that can be definitely answered, except of course by the actual production of a tragedy by a Theosophist, and then no essay would be needed. Yet it might be possible, even helpful, to define some of the difficulties which such a playwright surely would encounter. Certain ideas, or rather certain attitudes towards one's ideas, do indeed seem inimical to the tragic vision, and it is important to determine whether theosophical ideas—or again our attitudes towards these ideas—are also in some way inimical to it. Richard B. Sewall, in an important book about tragedy, declares that "the tragic vision is in its first phase primal, or primitive, in that it calls up out of the depths the first (and last) of all questions, the question of existence: 'What does it mean to be?' It recalls the original terror, harking back to a world that antedates the conceptions of philosophy, the consolations of the later religions, and whatever constructions the human mind has devised to persuade itself that its universe is secure. It recalls the original unreason, the terror of the irrational. It sees man as questioner, naked, unaccommodated, alone, facing mysterious, demonic forces in his own nature and outside, and the irreducible facts of suffering and death. Thus it is not for those who cannot live with unsolved questions or unresolved doubts, whose bent of mind would reduce the fact of evil to something else or resolve it into some larger whole.

Though no one is exempt from moments of tragic doubt or insight, the vision of life peculiar to the mystic, the pious, the propagandist, the confirmed optimist or pessimist—or the confirmed anything—is not tragic."

It is pertinent at this point to recall the words of the *Gita*: "One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass"; which seem to indicate that the "confirmed" Theosophist (in this way like the "confirmed" Christian, who believes in a heavenly reconciliation in the hereafter) is able to escape, or in some way be carried beyond the realm of tragedy. Yet, as Sewall indicates, tragedy requires action—the hero's counterthrust against his fate. Lamentation is not enough; there must be an active dialectic with destiny, a dialectic which "is not of ideas in the abstract but of ideas in action, ideas as lived." And as soon as there is action, it seems inevitable that there will also be what Jung calls "the terrible ambiguity of immediate experience"—the sort of ambiguity in fact from which tragic action might spring. Thus it is that Marlowe in *Doctor Faustus* is able to write a real tragedy, despite the Christian dogmas underlying his story. According to church doctrine, Faustus is completely in the wrong and deserves damnation; humanly speaking, though, he is caught in a dilemma, drawn by two opposing forces, both powerful, both noble. Attempting to cut through the ambiguities, he decides to embrace one of the forces, the "wrong" one, as it turns out; yet the ambiguities still remain, and actually invite us to share his feelings of uncertainty and to experience pity and terror at his fall. Like *Macbeth,* it is a story of damnation, and no doubt has inspired many nice arguments among theologians as to concepts of hell, free will, etc.; but since it is told almost completely in human terms instead of theoretical ones, it would conceivably be possible for a Theosophist to write much the same play, and yet be thinking (though this applies more closely to *Macbeth*) of the terrible process of the personality's annihilation if it persists in following evil.

It follows that tragedy is to a large extent a view of life, an attitude, even towards the ideas we hold (since "attitude" means "ideas as lived"). Perhaps it is not the highest possible attitude, perhaps one day we will progress to the point where the universe will appear to us as a vast and divine comedy; but if the tragic outlook is not the highest, yet it is very high, and we might be less than honest with ourselves if we take our theoretical beliefs for heartfelt and mind-

tested knowledge, and think ourselves above the tragic vision when we are really below it. The Book of Job according to H.P.B. is highly theosophical, and represents the process of spiritual initiation. Yet that work is surely a tragedy, at least right up to the moment when Yahweh appears in the Whirlwind (a point at which, it may be argued, the work soars beyond the limits of tragedy, beyond catharsis or complete emotional release, into a mystical self-abnegation or spiritual release). If the "Lord" really is the Law, then we must quickly get rid of our usual complacency regarding it; for the Law in the Book of Job appears all-powerful, terrifying, inscrutable. How often, when we fail to understand the reasons for some event in life—a plane crash, perhaps, or an assassination, or an imbecile birth—do we shrug our shoulders and say, "It is Karma," as though that meant it was somehow "all right," that everything was neatly accounted for and could easily be understood if only we had the right decoding device. Such is the view of Job's "comforters," and they are shown to be wrong—not theoretically (though even there they are incomplete)—but humanly. They are wrong because they are complacent. Sewall speaks of Job as "making an important—and 'tragic'—statement about the nature of truth. In tragedy, truth is not revealed as one harmonious whole; it is many-faceted, ambiguous, a sum of irreconcilables—and that is one source of its terror." It seems evident that unless we are willing to face this awesomeness, to fling our challenge at the Law itself—not in order to disprove it, but to see it face to face—unless, in short, we are willing to feel a tragic awareness of alienation from a once known, once loved, sense of cosmic harmony, we will never bring ourselves to the point of writing a tragedy, for we will never realize the tragic potential of life itself.

Yet if it is theoretically possible for a person to write a tragedy while still adhering to theosophical philosophy, it remains a question as to whether a person—Theosophist or not—could write such a work in our enormously complex and yet equally flat and tasteless civilization. Tragedy requires a situation, a hero, and an action. Have we any heroes nowadays—anyone who can gather together and comprehend all our complexities, remain undiminished in the presence of skyscrapers, uncowed in the face of the State? Many modern dramas, avoiding this question, present as hero some "simple genuine soul" struggling to maintain integrity while being attacked and tantalized by a cruel vast world. The "whole man"

of the Renaissance seems inconceivable today, for he would have to be a colossus. Indeed, if a tragic hero can exist today, we may find it necessary to revise our conception of what a hero is, and with it, perhaps, our definition of tragedy.

As for the tragic situation, that too seems to have undergone a change; for if the universe is ordered, it is not so obviously ordered as the Elizabethan's universe, or for that matter, the Greek's. Perhaps today's potentially tragic situation has to do with man's poignant sense of alienation from a divine order, even from human values. And perhaps therefore a tragic confrontation might not be with the Whirlwind at all, but with a sense of universal emptiness. From another (and more theosophical) view, the underlying situation from which tragedy could spring may reside in what Jung calls the dichotomy between a conscious mind, which knows nothing, and the unconscious, which has intimations of everything but cannot express itself except indirectly and incompletely.

But what could tragic *action* possibly be? Is the only conceivable gesture one such as Anouilh proposes, some free, non-contingent action, often self-destructive, which has no other purpose than to show man's freedom to act without compromising or looking for reward? It is difficult to answer any of these questions. One might conjecture that since man has become more psychologically orientated than ever before, it is likely that his actions will be primarily internal, representing an increasing struggle to discover and face the "contents of the unconscious," and perhaps the contents of the world's collective unconscious as well. This is not to say that outward actions in tragedy have not always been emblematic of inward changes, but there seems something new in today's situation, a greater and more painful self-awareness than has generally existed before, a more pervasive feeling of being lost, a deeper anxiety. Whether these and other elements will bring about the death of tragedy as an art form, or will serve as its rejuvenator in the near future, is a question which can find no adequate solution in the theories of critics. As indicated at the beginning, we can only wait and see.

FROM "ISIS UNVEILED"

PLATO'S method, like that of geometry, was to descend from universals to particulars. Modern science vainly seeks a first cause among the permutations of molecules; the former sought and found it amid the majestic sweep of worlds. For him it was enough to know the great scheme of creation and to be able to trace the mightiest movements of the universe through their changes to their ultimates. The petty details, whose observation and classification have so taxed and demonstrated the patience of modern scientists, occupied but little of the attention of the old philosophers. Hence, while a fifth-form boy of an English school can prate more learnedly about the little things of physical science than Plato himself, yet, on the other hand, the dullest of Plato's disciples could tell more about the great cosmic laws and their mutual relations, and demonstrate a familiarity with and control over the occult forces which lie behind them, than the most learned professor in the most distinguished academy of our day.

The unprofitableness of modern scientific research is evinced in the fact that while we have a name for the most trivial particle of mineral, plant, animal, and man, the wisest of our teachers are unable to tell us anything definite about the *vital force* which produces the changes in these several kingdoms. It is necessary to seek further for corroboration of this statement than the works of our highest scientific authorities themselves. And it requires no little moral courage in a man of eminent professional position to do justice to the acquirements of the ancients. When we meet with a case of the kind we gladly lay a laurel at the feet of the bold and honest scholar. Professor Jowett, speaking of "the physical philosophy of the ancients as a whole," gives them the following credit: (1) "That the nebular theory was the received belief of the early physicists." Therefore it could not have rested, as Draper asserts, upon the telescopic discovery made by Herschel I. (2) "That the development of animals out of frogs who came to land, and of man out of animals, was

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NOTE.—A student's collation.

held by Anaximenes in the sixth century before Christ." The professor might have added that this theory antedated Anaximenes by some thousands of years, perhaps; that it was an accepted doctrine among Chaldeans, and that Darwin's evolution of species and monkey theory are of an antediluvian origin.

(3) ". . . that, even by Philolaus and the early Pythagoreans, the earth was held to be a body like the other stars revolving in space." Thus Galileo, studying some Pythagorean fragments, which are shown by Reuchlin to have yet existed in the days of the Florentine mathematician; being, moreover, familiar with the doctrines of the old philosophers, but reasserted an astronomical doctrine which prevailed in India at the remotest antiquity. (4) The ancients ". . . thought that there was a sex in plants as well as in animals." Thus our modern naturalists had but to follow in the steps of their predecessors. (5) "That musical notes depended on the relative length or tension of the strings from which they were emitted, and were measured by ratios of number." (6) "That mathematical laws pervaded the world and even qualitative differences were supposed to have their origin in number"; and (7), "the annihilation of matter was denied by them, and held to be a *transformation* only." "Although one of these discoveries might have been supposed to be a happy guess," adds Mr. Jowett, "we can hardly attribute them all to mere coincidences."

In short, the Platonic philosophy was one of order, system, and proportion; it embraced the evolution of worlds and species, the correlation and conservation of energy, the transmutation of material form, the indestructibility of matter and of spirit.

Why do not masters restore to us the lost *arts* of our postdiluvian forefathers? Why do they not give us the unfading colors of Luxor—the Tyrian purple; the bright vermillion and dazzling blue which decorate the walls of this place, and are as bright as on the first day of their application? The indestructible cement of the pyramids and of the ancient aqueducts; the Damascus blade, which can be turned like a corkscrew in its scabbard without breaking; the gorgeous, unparalleled tints of the stained glass that is found amid the dust of old ruins and beams in the windows of ancient cathedrals; and the secret of the true malleable glass? And if chemistry is so little able to rival even with the early mediæval ages in some arts, why boast of achievements which, according to strong probability, were perfectly known thousands of years ago?

Why should we forget that, ages before the prow of the adventurous Genoese clove the Western waters, the Phoenician vessels had circumnavigated the globe, and spread civilization in regions now silent and deserted? What archæologist will dare assert that the same hand which planned the Pyramids of Egypt, Karnak, and the thousand ruins now crumbling to oblivion on the sandy banks of the Nile, did *not* erect the monumental Nagkon-Wat of Cambodia? Or trace the hieroglyphics on the obelisks and doors of the deserted Indian village discovered in British Columbia by Lord Dufferin; or those on the ruins of Palenque and Uxmal, of Central America?

"They were not without some knowledge of optics," Professor Draper magnanimously concedes to the ancients. "The convex lens found at Nimroud shows that they were not unacquainted with magnifying instruments." Cicero tells us that he had seen the entire *Iliad* written on a skin of such a miniature size that it could easily be rolled up inside a nut-shell, and Pliny asserts that Nero had a ring with a small glass in it, through which he watched the performance of the gladiators at a distance. . . . Truly, when we are told that Mauritius could see from the promontory of Sicily over the entire sea to the coast of Africa, with an instrument called *nauscopite,* we must either think that all these witnesses lied, or that the ancients were more than slightly acquainted with optics and magnifying glasses.

Wendell Phillips states that he has a friend who possesses an extraordinary ring "perhaps three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and on it is the naked figure of the god Hercules. By the aid of glasses you can distinguish the interlacing muscles, and count every separate hair on the eyebrows. Rawlinson brought home a stone about twenty inches long and ten wide, containing an entire treatise on mathematics. It would be perfectly illegible without glasses."

It is worthy of admiration to follow in various modern works the cautious attempts to draw a line of demarcation between what we are and what we are not to believe, in ancient authors. No credit is ever allowed them without being followed by a qualifying caution. If Strabo tells us that ancient Nineveh was forty-seven miles in circumference, and his testimony is accepted, why should it be otherwise the moment he testifies to the accomplishment of Sibylline prophecies? Perhaps, after all, such a caution is more than ever necessary—the disenchantment may prove too cruel.

Europe prides herself upon the discoveries of Copernicus and

Galileo, and now we are told that the astronomical observations of the Chaldeans extend back to within a hundred years of the flood; and Bunsen fixes the flood at not less than 10,000 years before our era. Moreover, a Chinese emperor, more than 2,000 years before the birth of Christ, put to death his two chief astronomers for not predicting an eclipse of the sun!

We will endeavor to briefly indicate the extraordinary similarity, or rather identity, of rites and ceremonial dress of the Christian clergy with that of the old Babylonians, Assyrians, Phœnicians, Egyptians, and other Pagans of hoary antiquity; the Latin Church having faithfully preserved in these, and in symbols and architecture, even in the very dress of her clergy, the public or exoteric ceremonies of old Pagan worship. Thus, if we would find the model of the Papal tiara, we must search the annals of the ancient Assyrian tablets. In Inman's *Ancient and Modern Christian Symbolism,* on page sixty-four, one will readily recognize the head-gear of the successor to St. Peter in the coiffure worn by gods or angels in ancient Assyria, "where it appears crowned by an emblem of the *male* trinity" (the Christian Cross).

"Immaculate is our Lady Isis," is the legend around an engraving of Serapis and Isis, described by King, in "The Gnostics and their Remains"—the very terms applied afterwards to that personage (the Virgin Mary) who succeeded to her form, titles, symbols, rites, and ceremonies. Thus, her devotees carried into the new priesthood the former badges of their profession, the obligation to celibacy, the tonsure, and the surplice, omitting, unfortunately, the frequent ablutions prescribed by the ancient creed. The "Black Virgins," so highly reverenced in certain French cathedrals proved, when at last critically examined, basalt figures of Isis.

Before the shrine of Jupiter Ammon were suspended tinkling bells, from the sound of whose chiming the priests gathered the auguries. "A golden bell and a promegranate . . . round about the hem of the robe," was the result with the Mosaic Jews. But in the Buddhistic system, during the religious services, the gods of the Deva Loka are always invoked, and invited to descend upon the altars by the ringing of bells suspended in the pagodas. The bell of the sacred table of Siva at Kuhama is described in Kailasa, and every Buddhist vihara and lamasery has its bells.

We thus see that the bells used by the Christians come to them directly from the Buddhist Thibetans and Chinese. The beads and

rosaries have the same origin, and have been used by Buddhist monks for over 2,300 years. The title of "nun" is an Egyptian word, and had with them the actual meaning; the Christians did not take the trouble of translating from the word *Nonna*. The aureole of the saints was used by the antediluvian artists of Babylonia, whenever they desired to honor or deify a mortal's head. In a celebrated picture in Moore's *Hindoo Pantheon,* entitled "Christna nursed by Devaki, from a highly-finished picture," the Hindu Virgin is represented as seated on a lounge and nursing Christna (Krishna). The hair brushed back, the long veil, and the golden aureole around the Virgin's head, as well as around that of the Hindu Saviour, are striking.

What we desire to prove is, that underlying every ancient popular religion was the same ancient wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practiced by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance. A philosophy so profound, a moral code so ennobling, and practical results so conclusive and so uniformly demonstrable is not the growth of a generation, or even a single epoch. The proofs of this identity of fundamental doctrine in the old religions are found in the prevalence of a system of initiation; in the secret sacerdotal castes who had the guardianship of mystical words of power, and a public display of a phenomenal control over natural forces, indicating association with preterhuman beings.

Every approach to the Mysteries of all these nations was guarded with the same jealous care, and in all, the penalty of death was inflicted upon initiates of any degree who divulged the secrets entrusted to them.

JESUS, THE INITIATE

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been administered by force, and only those in power control it.

To you it is granted to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but it is not granted to them.

Whoever hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away the word which has been sown in his heart. (Matt. 11:12; 13: 11, 19.)

—*Lamsa* (Trans. from Aramaic)

on the lookout

"The Death Penalty and Fair Trial"

The *Nation* for April 6 has an article with this title by Walter E. Oberer, a professor of law at the University of Texas. Dr. Oberer is primarily concerned with a much-neglected issue—whether disqualification of jurors for scruples against capital punishment may constitute a denial of fair trial in cases where capital crimes are at issue. From a theosophical point of view, Dr. Oberer's work is of great value, since he points out—with documentation—that the more intelligent and perceptive the prospective jurors, the more difficult it becomes to select a jury in a death penalty case. Dr. Oberer writes:

> In a New Jersey case in 1959, for example, more than 300 prospective jurors were reported to have been examined before a jury could be obtained. Public-opinion surveys conducted in recent years cast some light upon this problem. A Gallup poll in 1960 showed 51 per cent of the nation in favor of capital punishment. A Roper poll in 1958 showed 42 per cent in favor, 50 per cent opposed and 8 per cent undecided. What these polls do not reveal, however, is that a substantial percentage of those who express themselves as favoring capital punishment are speaking in the abstract; they want no part of such awesome responsibility themselves, and so fail before the prosecution's challenge for cause.

The Crucial Questions

Dr. Oberer continues:

> The result has been that a jury in a capital case is no longer representative of the community from which it is drawn. While community attitudes toward the death penalty have changed, the attitude required by law of the capital jury remains frozen. Such a jury represents, today, a fragment of the community—those who not only *condone* capital punishment but *believe* in it to the extent of being willing personally to vote for the death sentence. Viewed in this light, it becomes almost irrelevant to argue, as some do, that many prospective jurors merely utilize the death-scruples device to avoid serving on a capital jury. To the extent that this is true, it may tend to aggravate rather than mitigate

the minority character of the capital jury. It can be argued that those who survive the examination, and thus man the jury box, become almost *volunteers*—that they are not merely impartial on the death penalty, but affirmatively support it.

What is the bearing of the minority complexion of the capital jury on fair trial and due process of law? This question leads to three more specific questions: (1) Does such a jury constitute a "jury of one's peers?" (2) Can such a jury be expected to answer guilt-innocence questions (such as the question of whether the defendant was sane or insane at the time of his alleged offense) as favorably to the defendant as a jury not death-qualified? (3) Can such a jury, in the event it convicts, be expected to decide impartially on the nature of the punishment?

Education versus Jury Protocol

Austin MacCormick, professor emeritus of criminology at the University of California at Berkeley, recently summarized the gradual increase of enlightenment of public opinion regarding the death penalty:

In recent years, interest in the question of abolishing or retaining capital punishment has mounted fast in the United States and England. With France, these remain the only major Western nations still imposing the death penalty.

Rapidly growing movements in this country and abroad to end capital punishment have met with the vigorous opposition of retentionists, often involving bitter controversy and heated legislative debates. Meanwhile, there has been an ever-widening awareness by the general public of the basic issues, with many people openly or silently aligning themselves on one side or the other of this battleground of conscience.

Numerous books have been written by earnest and able writers, many of whom have approached the subject from one or another field of interest—penological, social, moral, or religious—or a combination of fields of interest. A vast array of works covering the entire area of the debate has been accumulating over the years. (Introduction to *The Case Against Capital Punishment,* by Eugene Block—*Manas* for April 15.)

Mr. Block's book, as previously indicated, is a valuable collection of statements by competent authors who oppose capital punishment. There is, for example, the following arresting sentence from the pen of Thomas Jefferson: "I shall ask for the abolition of the punishment of death until I have the infallibility of human judgment demonstrated to me."

Mr. Block devotes a section to instances where the innocent have been executed, and the prospect of such occurrences, now recog-

nized as far from impossible, have led many prospective jurors to admit "prejudice" against the death penalty. Mr. Block writes:

> The constant, haunting danger of executing an innocent man is one of the most frequently voiced arguments against capital punishment. While abolitionists also contend that it is morally wrong, degrading to society, and satisfies only a barbaric cry for vengeance, they emphasize the obvious fact that the death penalty is irrevocable—that vindication after death can have no solace for the victim and serves only to compound the tragedy for family and friends.

Dr. Oberer's Challenge

The *Nation* article concludes with these questions:

> The theory is that the prosecution (the "People," the "State," the "United States") is entitled to an impartial jury on the issue of punishment. This new theory raises more questions than it answers. For example: Why, in the qualification of the jury, should the prosecution's interest as to the *punishment* issue be given precedence over the defendant's interest as to the more fundamental *guilt* issue? On what basis is it presumed that a death-qualified jury is as impartial on the *guilt* issue as one not so qualified? In a state such as Texas, where the jury has a broad discretion on the punishment issue itself (term of years, life sentence or death), on what basis is it presumed that a death-qualified jury is impartial from the defendant's standpoint *even on the punishment issue?* Why should the defendant in a capital case be denied the same kind of jury on the *guilt* issue as that accorded in non-capital cases? In summary, what are the constitutional implications of trial before a jury which, by reason of changing community values not yet reflected in the law, is drawn from a shrinking and therefore increasingly extremist fraction of the community?
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> None of these questions is adequately considered, much less answered, in any court report I have been able to find. It is, however, interesting to note that in England, where they have loved liberty and justice and also tried and executed criminals for ages longer than we, the practice of death-qualifying jurors is unknown.

Pearl Buck on Reincarnation

This celebrated novelist once admitted to an interviewer that her mind inclined toward science rather than religion, and that, although both her father and her first husband were missionaries, doctrinaire Christianity was a foreign language to her. There are two schools of science, she went on to say: one believes that every-

thing is impossible until proved possible; the other that everything is possible until proved impossible. It was to the latter school that she adhered. While Mrs. Buck's novels seldom pursue discussions of religious subjects, it is of particular interest that in her latest book, *The Living Reed,* a novel of Korea, she shows an apparent appreciation of the possibility of reincarnation. In describing a baby boy by name of Liang, born to Yul-han and his wife Induk, she writes:

> At first Yul-han thought of the child only as his son, a part of himself, a third with Induk. As time passed, however, a most strange prescience took hold of his mind and spirit. . . He perceived that the child possessed an old soul. It was not to be put in words, this meaning of an old soul. Yul-han, observing the child, saw in his behavior a reasonableness, a patience, a comprehension, that was totally unchildlike. He did not scream when his food was delayed, as other infants do. Instead, his eyes calm and contemplative, he seemed to understand and was able to wait. These eyes, quietly alive, moved from Yul-han's face to Induk's when they talked, as though he knew what his parents said. . . . He gazed at them with such intelligence, such awareness, that it was as if he spoke their names, not as his parents, but as persons whom he recognized.

Soul-recognition?

So marked in the infant was this reflective or knowledgeable gaze that "Yul-han, watching, felt a certain awe, a hesitancy in calling him 'my son,' as though the claim were presumption." And later, he said to Induk: "If I were a Buddhist, I would say that this child is an incarnation of some former great soul." A short time afterward, Liang meets his uncle whom he had never seen, and who was a great Korean hero known to the people as "the living reed." Mrs. Buck describes the meeting:

> The child was barely awake but being amiable and benign by nature, he roused himself and smiled at his uncle at first without much concern. Suddenly, however, an inexplicable change took place. The smile left his face, he leaned forward in his mother's arms and gazed most earnestly into his uncle's eyes. He gave a cry of joy, he reached out his arms . . . while Yul-han and Induk stood transfixed in amazement. [Recalling the event years later, the uncle remarks to Liang:] "You sprang into my arms . . . you knew me from some other life."

Although not strictly parallel instances, the foregoing will doubtless recall Mr. Judge's observation on first meeting H.P.B.: "It was

her eye that attracted me, the eye of one I must have known in lives long passed away. She looked at me in recognition at that first hour, and never since has that look changed. It was as if but the evening before we had parted. . . ."

The Position of the Censor

The American Library Association's *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* is composed of statements, legal proceedings, and other facts relating to censorship today. In an article which is reprinted from the Australian Library Journal, G. M. Jenks, commenting on the attitude of the censor and the dangers involved in censorship, notes:

> In censoring books, movies or records, censors base their decisions on moral grounds, with noble intentions: the public must be protected. Since there is no evidence that the public needs such protection, or that the censors know what they are protecting the public from, the conclusion is clear: censors censor what they do not like, what offends their sensibilities. It is a purely subjective decision. As long as the law permits censorship in any form, there is the danger that the good will be excluded with the bad. No man can look at a book, any book, and say: "This book is harmful." A glance at the Customs Department's list of banned books will readily show the folly of letting men, even literate men, make decision as to what is suitable for reading.

In one sense the censor is inevitably a demagogue; he has an "evil opponent," a "lofty goal," and the reward or satisfaction of having participated in a "worthy cause." Such a person never lacks zeal and justification. Unfortunately, his zeal is that of a dogmatic moralist, and his justification is likely to be self-righteousness disguised as social reform. The "ban-the-book" advocate may be partially correct in his accusations: some books convey a tainted psychic atmosphere. Unfortunately, the censor takes this generalization and turns it into an ethical mandate, forces it upon the potential reader, and tacitly claims his word as the final authority. The question is not whether he is right or wrong in his position, but whether one person can ever assume responsibility for another's growth or education.

The *Newsletter* has an article which gives a clear statement of one effect of censorship, that persons who "are shielded from the real world as it exists and has existed are ill prepared to understand history's pageantry of brutality and kindness."

Freedom and Commitment

The concept of a subjective and free agent within every human being is finding more importance with many serious thinkers of our time. The "new psychology," given impetus by Abraham Maslow, Erich Fromm, Carl Rogers, and others, is a good illustration of the concern for a viable concept of the Self. In one sense, these men have outgrown the institutions which nurtured them and are now extending the growing tips of a new conception of man. A brief introduction to their writings makes one realize that there are no institutional forms or cultural ideals to support their probing. These psychologists speak to the man who has exhausted the meager idealism of our age and who stands alone—without an idea of the Self which can support his life. They are trying to talk to the subject within man; and they are succeeding.

For many years psychotherapy has been the matrix in which broader and more meaningful conceptions of Man have developed. It is from the searching inquiry in therapy that the ideas of the "self" and "meaning" are gaining acceptance by psychologists. These ideas are now deepening to include such concepts as freedom and commitment. Such therapeutic questioning led Dr. Rogers to say, in an article in the *Humanist* (March - April, 1964):

> What I am trying to suggest is that I would be at a loss to explain the positive change which can occur in psychotherapy if I had to omit the importance of a sense of free and responsible choice on the part of my clients. I believe that this experience of freedom to choose is one of the deepest elements underlying change.

The Meaning of this Freedom

Dr. Rogers elaborates:

> In the first place, the freedom that I am talking about is essentially an inner thing, something which exists in the living person quite aside from any of the outward choices of alternatives which we so often think of as constituting freedom. It is the realization that "I can live myself, here and now, by my own choice." It is the quality of courage which enables a person to step into the uncertainty of the unknown. . . . It is the discovery of meaning from within oneself, meaning which comes from listening sensitively and openly to the complexities of what one is experiencing. It is the burden of being responsible for the self one chooses to be. It is the recognition by a person that he is an emerging process, not a static end product. . . . So we are first of all speaking of something which exists within the individual,

something phenomenological rather than objective, but nonetheless to be prized.

> I see this freedom . . . as existing in a different dimension than the determined sequence of cause and effect. I regard it as a freedom which exists in the subjective person, a freedom which he courageously uses to live his potentialities.

The Dynamic of Commitment

Dr. Rogers introduces the next part of his article with the heading "The Emergence of Commitment." He says:

> What about commitment? Certainly the disease of our age is lack of purpose, lack of meaning, lack of commitment on the part of individuals.
>
> It is clear to me that commitment to purpose and to meaning in life is one of the significant elements of change. It is only when the person decides, "I am someone; I am someone worth being; I am committed to being myself," that change becomes possible.

Spiritualism and Reincarnation

Few of those attracted to the glamour of séance phenomena are willing to give fair consideration to the philosophy of reincarnation. Wishful thinking, apparently, leads to belief that the "other world" which is attained after death is a much happier place than this one; and for anyone to suggest that discarnate entities will exhaust their dreams and return to the necessary work of earth-life is regarded as a positive affront. Criticism of Theosophy and its "reincarnationist view" was characteristic of the spiritualists of H.P.B.'s time, while a book reviewed in Lookout for November, 1956 (Dewitt Miller's *Reincarnation*) shows that the prejudice is still very much in evidence.

There are notable exceptions among spiritualists, however, as in the case of *Telephone Between Worlds* (1950), by James Crenshaw (Devorss), now in its fifth printing. Mr. Crenshaw is a Los Angeles reporter who undertook to assemble the teachings proclaimed by medium Richard Zenor, purportedly reaching him from an invisible "Master." (Mr. Zenor was a clairvoyant as well as a medium, and his ability to locate missing persons, lost objects, etc., received considerable publicity.)

Illumination Must be Won

Mr. Zenor's "Master," it is clear, insists that reincarnation is indeed a fact in nature. Mr. Crenshaw summarizes this teaching

of rebirth, as reported after trance-induced instructions:

> To understand perfectly the workings of the law is the goal of many lifetimes of experience and contemplation of the meaning of experience. The beginner in the kindergarten school of universal understanding must start by correcting some deep-rooted superstitions concerning his state of being in the next world.
>
> First, his soul after leaving the physical body does not sleep without awakening until some distant Judgment Day. Every day is judgment day for every soul.
>
> Second, he does not graduate from the earth plane to a state of eternal idleness, rest and bliss, nor to one of eternal damnation. Such states, if they occur at all, are encountered because of the consciousness of the individual and are never more than temporary interruptions of his unfoldment.
>
> Third, he does not upon leaving his present body promptly become a master of all of the secrets of heaven and earth, capable of revealing the true answers to all problems and mysteries in either his world or ours. Actually in most cases he will be about as ignorant or as wise directly after his passing as he was before.

Philosophy and its Implications

Mr. Crenshaw's summary of these instructions from the "other world" continues:

> No one lifetime is great enough to encompass the full meaning of the law, nor is one form sufficient to objectify the true divine harmony of the soul. Hence, it is both natural and desirable that the soul should take on many forms in many ages, gradually perfecting them through experience as objective expressions of the more perfect self.
>
> Advancement through the cycles of reincarnation is always forward, though the necessities of experience may require a return again and again to old environments and situations to guarantee that lessons are well learned; or there may be a momentary glimpse of truth with a later apparent slipping back to apply the lesson in the practical field of experience.
>
> But always there is the promise of ultimate success for everyone; there is salvation for all, while the greatest punishment is an opportunity to learn the lessons anew, however painful the process may be.
>
> We remember that the record of all our acts and conduct—even the very act of self-appraisal, the contemplation of our conduct—is kept within our permanent selves, the inextinguishable spark of the Great Self that is our soul. It, like a probing amoeba, seeks expression through many forms, in different climes and through a variety of imperfections of experience to discover the best, the True Way and the perfect form.